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the ground, and well oiled. A silver ornament, or a few rupees, placed at the top, reward the successful climber." A leg of mutton, or a piece of pork fixed at the top of this pole would render the pastime identical with the "greasy-pole" climbing of English villages. The following are some other Khasi games:—

Wrestling: two persons grasping each other's hands with the fingers interlocked, and then trying to push one another down; tug-of-war with a piece of stick, the two combatants placing their feet one against the other; butting at one another like bulls, and trying to upset each other (*ia tur mosi*): long jump; high jump; blind-man's buff; flying kites; pitching cowries into a hole in the ground; a game like marbles, only played with round pebbles, and others.

MANUFACTURES.

The manufactures of the Khasis are few in number, and do not seem to show any tendency to increase. On the contrary, two of the most important industries, the smelting of iron ore and the forging of iron implements therefrom, and the cotton-spinning industries at Mynso and Suhtngu, show signs of dying out. Ploughshares and hoes and bill-hooks can now be obtained more cheaply from the plains than from the forges in the hills, and Manchester piece goods are largely taking the place of cloths of local manufacture. The iron industry in former days was an important one, and there is abundant evidence that the workings were on a considerable scale, e.g. at Nongkrem and Laitlyngkot, in the shape of large granite boulders which have fallen to the ground from the sides of the hills owing to the softer rock which filled the interstices between the boulders having been worked out by the iron-workers, their process being to dig out the softer ferruginous rock, and then extract the iron ore from it by means of washing. The softer rock having been removed, the heavier portions fell by their own weight, and rolled down to the bottom of the slopes, the result being the great number of boulders to be seen near the sites of these workings.

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been denuded completely of timber, charcoal being necessary for smelting, has affected the production almost as much as the presence of cheap iron in the market. 327

MANUFACTURE OF ERI SILK CLOTHS AND COTTON CLOTHS IN THE JAINTIA HILLS.

The number of weavers in the district at the last Census was 533. This number in the Census Report is ascribed to the cotton industry, no mention being made of weavers of silk. The spinning of Eri silk thread, and weaving it into cloths is, however, a fairly considerable industry amongst the Khyrwang and Nongtung villages of the Jaintia Hills. The Nongtungs and Khyrwangs rear their own Eri worms, and spin the silk from the cocoons. The late Mr. Stack, in his admirable note on silk in Assam, says, "Throughout the whole range of the southern hills, from the Mikir country, Eri thread is in great request for weaving those striped cloths, in which the mountaineers delight," but this observation should have been confined to the Jaintia Hills portion of this district, the Khasis not weaving themselves either in silk or cotton. The Khasis obtain their silk cloths from the Assam Valley, and from the Nongtung or Khyrwang villages in Jaintia. The latter villages have given the name to the striped cloth, *ka jiin Khyrwang*, which is almost invariably worn by the Syntengs. Mr. Stack has given in detail a description of the silk industry in Assam; and it is not therefore necessary to go over the same ground here. The Khyrwang cloth is red and white, mauve and white, or chocolate and white, the cloth being worn by both men and women. The Khyrwang cloths vary in price from Rs. 5 to Rs. 25, according to size and texture. These cloths are the handiwork of women alone, and a woman working every day regularly will take six months to manufacture a cloth valued at Rs. 25; but, as a rule, in the leisurely manner in which they work, it takes a year to complete it. 288 [162] [435] [462]

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COTTON CLOTHS.

283 In the Jaintia Hills at Mynso cotton is spun into thread, and
288 weaving is carried on there, but on a limited scale. The Mynso people weave the small strips of cloth worn by the men to serve the purpose of the Assamese *lengti* or Hindi *languti*. In Suhtnga the people import cotton thread from Mynso and weave the (*ingki*) or sleeveless coat, peculiar to the district; these coats are dyed red and blue. The dark blue or black dye
824 is obtained from the leaf of a plant called *u sybu*, which
386 Mr. Rita has classified as *strobilanthus hoeditolius*, which
288 grows in the gardens round the homesteads. The leaves are dried, then reduced to powder, mixed with hot water, and the skeins of thread are steeped in the liquid. The colour is permanent. The red dye is obtained from the mixture of the dry bark of two shrubs, *ka lapyndong* (*symplocos racemosa*, Roxb.), and *ka 'laruong* (*morinda-tinctoria*, Roxb.), the latter being the same as the Assamese (আচুকাটি) *áchukáith*. The bark is dried, then pounded, and the two sorts are mixed together and made into a paste with hot water. The skeins are steeped in this mixture for twenty-four hours, then taken out and divided, and again steeped for another twenty-four hours. The Lalungs and Bhois and Lynngams all weave cotton cloths, which are generally dyed blue, sometimes striped blue and red. The Wars weave cotton cloths which are dyed red and yellow, the cloths being woven in checks. Mr. Darrah remarks that the cotton grown in the Jaintia Hills is said to be the best cotton produced in the province. Its thread can be more closely woven than that of other kinds. This statement, however, is not borne out by Mr. Allen writing in 1858, who says that the cotton is of inferior quality, the staple being short and woolly. The cotton cloths woven by the Bhois are called *spun*.

POTTERY.

[162] The Census Report of 1901 gave the number of persons who
323 are supported by the manufacture of pottery at 54 only. Pottery is manufactured at one place only in the Jaintia Hills,